

# **Governor's Upper Yellowstone River Task Force Topics of Consideration**

The following list of topics was approved by the Task Force on August 20, 2002. This list is considered to be **fluid** and can be changed or added to at any time.

- 1. Bank Stabilization**
- 2. GIS Information**
- 3. Roads and Crossings**
- 4. Woody Debris**
- 5. Uses of River and Locations of Use**
- 6. Flood Plain**
- 7. Sedimentation and Dredging**
- 8. Permitting**
- 9. Indicators of a Healthy River**
- 10. Fires**
- 11. Plan Development**
- 12. Fisheries**

This list was developed by a special Task Force subcommittee: Michelle Goodwine, Ellen Woodbury, and Bob Wiltshire. It is based on an original December 9, 1997 Task Force Brainstorming Session, where the Task Force brainstormed a lengthy list of topics in response to two general questions:

What are the issues that the Task Force should consider?  
What does the Task Force want to do?

The topics and issues listed were then grouped into six general categories, as follows:

## **1. Inventory**

Two categories:

- (a) What we know, compiled from currently available data.
- (b) What we need to find out; information that is not readily available.

Describe the setting:                      How did the Task Force get here?  
Where is the Task Force headed?

Fish data available  
Stabilized banks  
Basic flow of river  
Stages  
GIS information  
Grazing and land use practices  
Role of fires  
Woody debris  
Chemistry  
Roads and Crossings  
Roles and interactions of tributaries  
Uses of river and locations  
Survey—topographic  
Groundwater—losing and gaining  
Geology  
Water quality and testing  
Hydrology  
Flood plain  
Watershed hydrology  
Gravel: where does it come from? Where does it go?  
Sedimentation  
Need Park Service and Forest Service participation  
TMDL

## **2. Training & Educational Needs (for the Task Force, public, landowners, and governmental agencies)**

Permitting. Is there a conditional permitting process? Flexibility and consistency  
Educate ourselves about the results of our inventory  
Case histories/legal rights  
What have the floods meant for the river?  
Role of fires  
Role and place of bank stabilization  
What is wild and free flowing?  
Chemistry, physics, biology of river  
Definitions  
History  
Economic values  
Watershed hydrology  
Understanding unique character of the Yellowstone River  
Floodplain importance and 100-year flood  
Gravel: what do we do about it? When are gravels essential to a healthy river? When are they not? What is equilibrium?  
Cottonwood and willow regeneration  
Dredging

**3. Health of the River: Biological and Economic**

What is being done now?  
What is a healthy river? For example: describe the river, muddy ...is this healthy?  
What effects have barbs and other actions had on the river?  
Pre- and post-flood fishery status  
Continued development of the floodplain  
Who "call" the river healthy?  
Can we define health? When? Why? Healthy for whom?  
What are indicators of health?  
Scenic values  
Role of fires

**4. Plan Development**

Develop a comprehensive plan  
Develop a plan that adapts to changing circumstances  
Conditional Corps permit—for example, one process?  
For a healthy river  
Water quality—targeting restoration efforts  
Compliance—monitoring

**5. Social Perceptions / Roles**

Loss of private property  
Harmony between growth and a wild river  
Concessions to keep the river wild and flowing  
Economic value  
Technical and financial assistance for studies and actions (bank stabilization)  
Facilitate a "meeting of minds" regarding the river and potential and /or real actions on it  
Role of society in helping facilitate sound decision-making  
Who will provide the floodplain?  
Continue to live along the river  
Continued development of floodplain  
Encouraging a comprehensive approach—articulate and implement  
Legal rights

**6. Implementation**

Compliance  
Monitoring  
Enforcement

